

MAG#0415085902

482

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM
for the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

B-1508

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME				
COMMON: 1225 N. Cathedral				
AND/OR HISTORIC:				
2. LOCATION				
STREET AND NUMBER: 1225 West Cathedral				
CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore				
STATE Maryland			COUNTY:	
3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress		Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <u>theater</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific				
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY				
OWNER'S NAME: Samuel D. Kalis				
STREET AND NUMBER: 1225 Cathedral				
CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore			STATE: Md.	
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION				
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Record's Office Room 601				
STREET AND NUMBER: 20072 DM Baltimore, MD Baltimore City Courthouse				
CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore, MD			STATE: 21202	
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #): MLP 8396 -1525				
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS				
TITLE OF SURVEY: City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey				
DATE OF SURVEY: 1975 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local				
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:				
STREET AND NUMBER: CITY HALL				
CITY OR TOWN: BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202			STATE:	

7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	(Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Uncolored <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>This two story building is laid in common bond; it is six bays wide on its north facade, one bay wide on its chamfered corner entrance, and two bays wide on its west facade.</p> <p>On the extreme left of the north facade are seven steps which lead to wooden double doors. These are framed by wood. Overhead is a round-arched transom now covered by wood. This is set in a round arch emphasized by splayed brickwork of headers interspersed between brick jointing.</p> <p>To the right of this is a stone water table, above which are single hung one-light basement windows in pairs. Some of these are boarded or grated; all have flat-arched stone lintels which are actually part of a stone belt course.</p> <p>Above these are pairs of double hung one-over-one windows with one piece segmentally-arched transoms contained within segmentally-arched niches. The arches are emphasized in a manner similar to that of the above mentioned doorway.</p> <p>In the second story, windows (double hung one-over-one with stained glass round-arched transoms) are again paired, but placed here in compound stilted round arches. The voussoirs consist of straight bond headers. Above these are two string courses. Above these are rondelles, one in each bay. A dentiled, moulded roof cornice tops the facade. Fenestration and decoration of the west facade follows the plan of the north facade.</p> <p>The chamfered corner entrance contains, in the first story, glass double doors surmounted by a round-arched transom of four lights of sheet glass. The decoration of the round arch containing this is like that mentioned for the windows and doorway on the north facade, with the addition of a large bracket for a keystone at the crown of the arch.</p> <p>A bracketed stone balcony appears above the doorway. Behind it is a pair of French windows which contain two lights each. Above this is a round-arched stained glass transom contained within a stilted round arch similar to those of the second story. Above the rondelle and the roof cornice is a sort of pediment, which consists of a truncated frieze flanked by scrolls; this in turn is surmounted by the same motif, only in smaller dimensions, the result being a triangular structure.</p>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Approximate Acreage of Nominated Property

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE

OR ORGANIZATION

STREET AND NUMBER

CITY OR TOWN

State Liaison Officer Review (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:

☐ National ☐ State ☐ Local

Signature

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0	'	"		0	'	"	
NE	0	'	"		0	'	"	
SE	0	'	"		0	'	"	
SW	0	'	"		0	'	"	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification: 41'7" by 97'6"

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Joseph Potts, Planning Ass't.
Mrs. Gloria Thompson, Neighborhood Survey Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET AND NUMBER

THE COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

CITY HALL

CITY OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202

STATE

12.

State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:

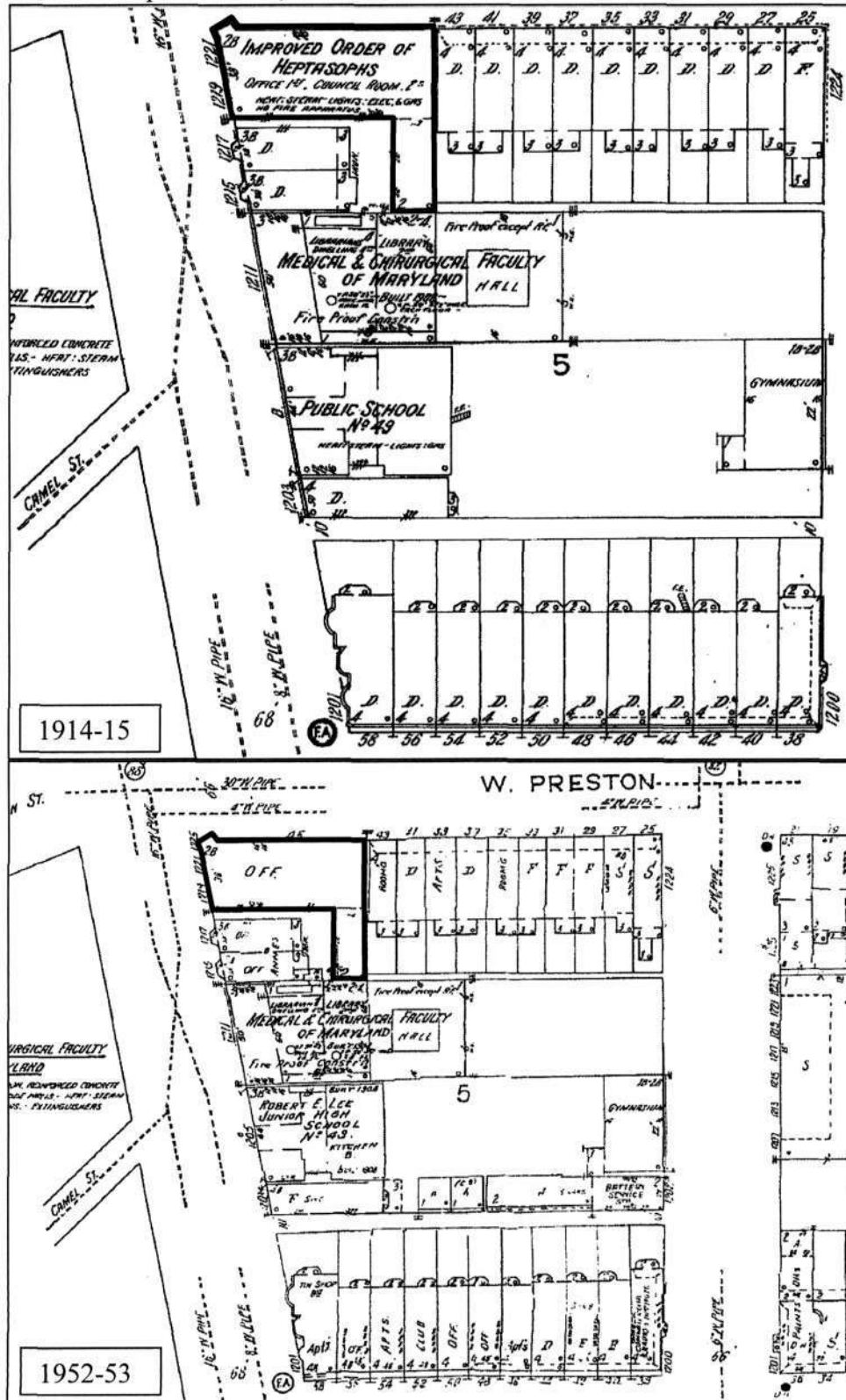
National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Signature _____

B-1508

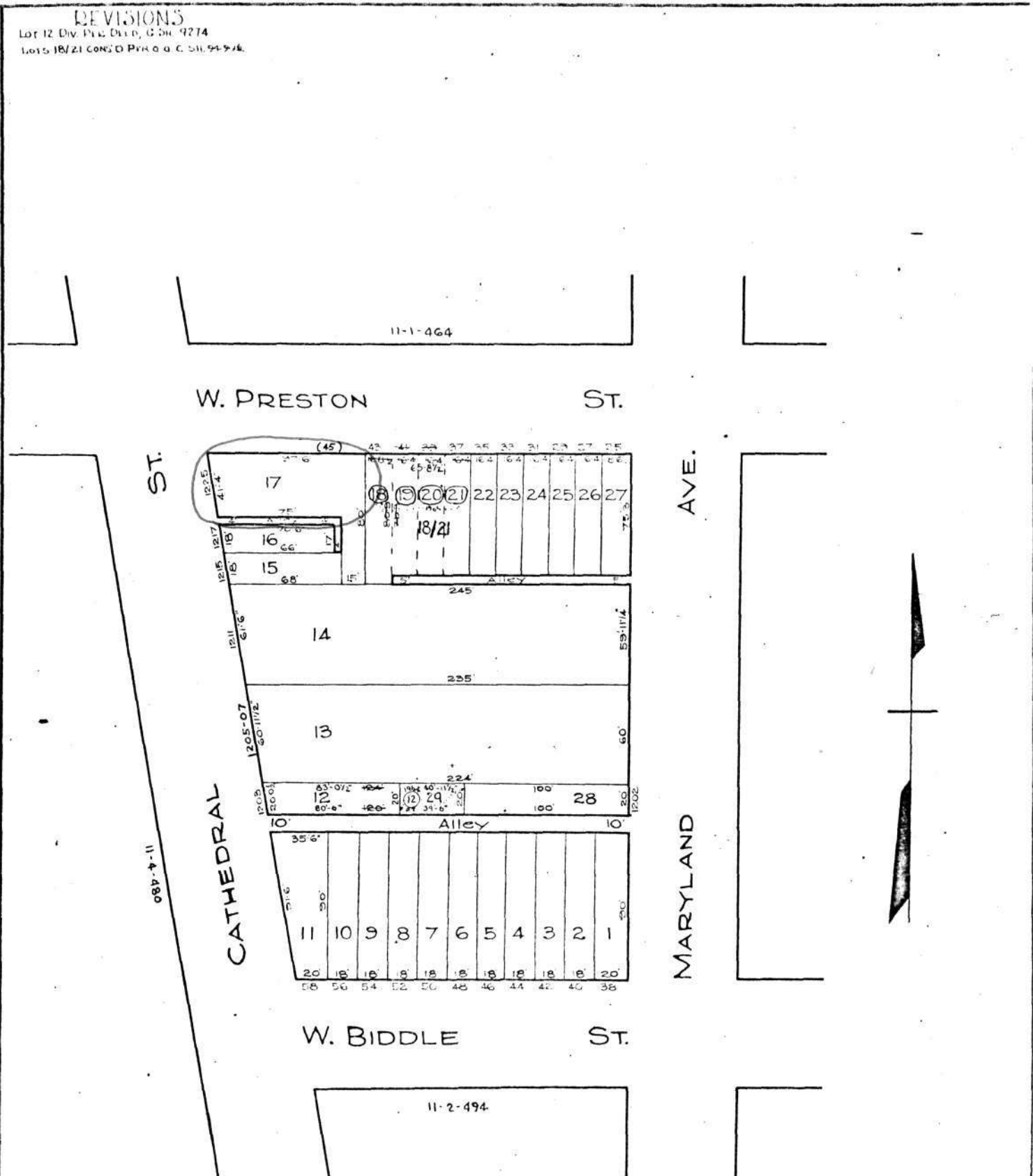
~~B-3597~~

Heptasoph Hall (Ethel's Place, Improved Order of Heptasophs, The Theatre Project)
1225 Cathedral Street/45 W. Preston Street
Sanborn Map Volume 2, Sheet 196



REVISIONS

LOT 12 DIV. P.L.D. 9274
 1015 18/21 COND. P.R.D. & C. 511, 949/4.

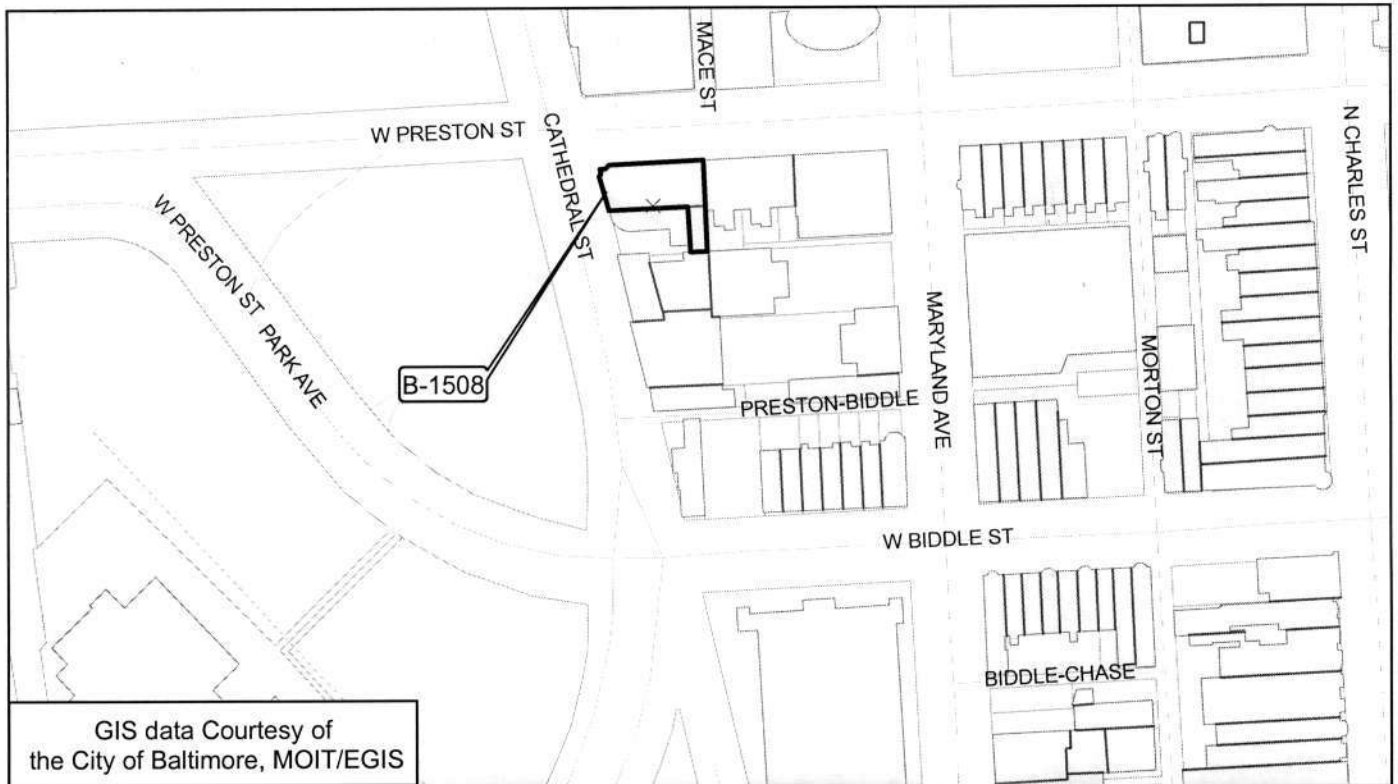


TRACED BY Moorehead
 LETTERED BY J. J. R. S. S.
 SUPERVISED BY R. J. T. Z.

NOTICE
 THIS IS A REAL PROPERTY PLAT AS PROVIDED
 FOR UNDER ARTICLE 21 OF THE CITY CHARTER
 IT IS CORRECTED TO THE DATE AND TIME
 OF THE RECORDING OF THIS PLAT IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

CITY OF BALTIMORE
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
 BUREAU OF PLANS & SURVEYS
 PROPERTY LOCATION DIVISION
 WARD 11 SECTION 2
 BLOCK 482
 SCALE: 1" = 100' DATE: 10/1/2012

B-1508
Improved Order of Heptasophs (The Theatre Project)
1225 Cathedral Street / *45 W. Preston Street*
Block 0482, Lot 015
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.





B-1508

Bck 482 / 1225
Cathedral



B- 1508

Blk 482 1275 Cathedral

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

B-1508
B-3597

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

HEPTASOPH HALL

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

45 West Preston Street

seventh

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY
Baltimore City

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Theatre Project, Inc.

Telephone #: (301)539-3091

STREET & NUMBER

45 West Preston Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21201

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore City Court House

Liber #: RHB 3520

Folio #: 30

STREET & NUMBER

100 North Calvert Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey - 45 W. Preston Street

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☒ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation

CITY, TOWN

City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland 21202

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

B-1508
B-2507

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

EXTERIOR

(Preston Street)
This two-story building is laid in common bond; it is six bays wide on its north facade, one bay wide on its chamfered corner entrance, and two bays wide on its west facade. *(Cathedral Street)*

On the extreme left of the north facade are seven steps which lead to wooden double doors. These are framed by wood. Overhead is a round-arched transom, now covered by wood. This is set in a round arch emphasized by splayed brickwork of headers interspersed between brick jointing.

To the right of this is a stone water table, above which are single hung one-light basement windows in pairs. Some of these are boarded or grated; all have flat-arched stone lintels which are actually part of a stone belt course.

Above these are pairs of double hung one-over-one windows with one piece segmentally-arched transoms contained within segmentally-arched niches. The arches are emphasized in a manner similar to that of the above mentioned doorway.

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The only alteration to the exterior consists of the conversion of a first floor window in the west wall to an emergency exit door and the attachment thereto of a small iron staircase to the pavement. This was added after 1949 as a photo published in 1949 (The Sun, January 23, 1949) shows this part unaltered.

INTERIOR

The majority of the interior spaces in this building have been altered by the previous owners. The following spaces constitute those which remain of historical significance.

(continued on separate sheet)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

7 DESCRIPTION

B-1508

CONDITION

— EXCELLENT
— GOOD
☒ FAIR

— DETERIORATED
— RUINS
— UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

— UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
— MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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(continued on separate sheet)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

7. DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

The main entry of West Preston Street has a ceramic tile mosaic in the floor. The mosaic has a dark brown border with a white background and the I.O.H. logo of the Improved Order of Heptasophs, in blue in the center. This mosaic is in good condition, although a few tiles are cracked or missing. The vestibule doors are original and are made of paneled oak.

The main stair including treads, handrail and wood details is intact, although in disrepair. At the balcony, the stair is pulling away from the wall, and needs to be rebuilt. The stair is a 3'-6" wide wood stair with turned balusters and a single handrail on the outside. The rail runs continuously across all landings and up the stairs. The stringer has a decorative wood trim piece in a wave motif. The balcony arcs out from the east wall of the building. Its balustrade, moldings and the underside of its floor are original woodwork.

The main hall at the second floor has been minimally altered. It contains a ceiling mounted version of the I.O.H. logo, inset with small globe lights, which has been restored. The original worn floor was covered by a new wood floor in 1977.

The stage has been shortened. It is three feet above the floor of the hall and has a curved plaster proscenium with a storage room behind it. The right stair onto the stage is intact. The left stair has been removed to allow for a fire exit.

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

Accompanying this application there are "as built" plans prepared by Lapicki/Smith Associates showing the layout of the first and second floors of Heptasoph Hall and its north and west elevations. Seventeen black and white photographs and nine color slides are also provided.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

B-3597
B-1508

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES *Circa 1896* BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heptasoph Hall is a historically significant building because it was built as the headquarters of an important fraternal and beneficial organization, the Improved Order of Heptasophs which flourished in the late nineteenth century in Baltimore and other cities; because it is a rare and well preserved example of decorative brickwork; and because, more recently, it is where Baltimore's professional repertory theatre began, and also where the Theatre Project began and continues as a performing arts education and presentation center for Baltimore.

The Theatre Project's building at 45 West Preston Street was constructed by the Zeta Club Conclave #6 of the Improved Order of Heptasophs (IOH).¹ The IOH was a fraternal and beneficial order chartered in Maryland in 1878. The Zeta Club bought the land for their building in May, 1896 from Corilla P. King, widow² of the owner of the "W.H. King and Company Lumber and Mill Work" a planning factory which occupied the site until destroyed by fire in about 1887.³

The building cost \$40,000.⁴ The architectural records in City archives were apparently destroyed by the Fire of 1904 and no information could be found as to the designer and builder of this edifice.

The building offers a unique example of decorative brickwork, the style and quantity of which is extremely rare in Baltimore. Its Preston Street/Cathedral Street corner angles conform to the angle of that particular intersection, and together with the elevations of the north and the west facades appear imaginative, but solid and pleasing.

The interior is less remarkable, with the exception of the high-ceilinged hall on the second floor. There the raftered ceiling with its IOH logo in lights and the shallow balcony with its fine woodwork lend special touches to a handsome spacious meeting hall.

The IOH logo is used decoratively in the exterior brickwork, in the north entrance's mosaic floor and in the stained glass as well as in the ceiling of the hall. This logo serves to identify the creators of the building and leads most visitors to wonder about the history of the place. The Improved Order of Heptasophs was a secret society and as such, stirs people's curiosity even more.

The Heptasophs, meaning "seven wise men" in Greek, were business men who joined together for mutual benefit.⁵ The Baltimore Chapter, The Zeta Club, sponsored an insurance program for their members and a savings and loan association, the Heptasoph Savings and Loan and Building Association. A two-story safe was built into the building

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY (continued on separate sheet)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (CONT'D)

to provide security for their assets and records.

Their insurance program, like that of many other fraternal orders, represents the origin of much of this nation's life insurance business today. By 1907, there were 12,000 members in Maryland.^{4/} The Heptasoph's program became insolvent in 1917 and merged with the Fraternal Aid Union of Lawrence, Kansas which later became the Standard Mutual Insurance Company.^{5/}

The Heptasophs moved to Heptasoph Savings and Loan and Building Association at 1106 East Monument Street, Baltimore, in 1924, and rented part of the Preston Street building to Farson's Dance Academy. During the 20's the building housed Mr. Farson's marching band, and his dance band, and was a favorite place for people to go dancing on Saturday nights.^{6/}

When the Zeta Club went into receivership in 1942, the Orthodox Greek Church Evangelism, Inc. bought the Heptasoph Hall to serve as a community recreation center and school for the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, located across Preston Street.

Baltimore's principal professional repertory theatre, Center Stage, had its first home in Heptasoph Hall. Center Stage began on January 13, 1963 with the opening of a two-week run of Arthur Schnitzler's "La Ronde."

The Theatre Project opened in the fall of 1971, renting the second floor where the main performance space is located, and the basement. Over the next six years while the theatre offered some 3,000 free performances by professional companies in dance, theatre and music, the Theatre Project gradually acquired the rest of the building, adapting each space to the varying needs of a working theatre.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (CONT'D)

5/ Dictionary of Secret and Other Societies, Arthur Pruess, B. Herder, St. Louis and London, 1924.

6/ personal reminiscence, Max E. Ripkin, 3305 Richmond Ave., Baltimore, Md., 21213.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (CONT'D)

westerly binding on the south side of Preston Street, eighty feet to the place of beginning. Beginning for the second thereof on the south side of Preston Street, at the distance of eighty feet easterly from the southwest corner of Preston Street and Cathedral Street; and running thence easterly, binding on the south side of Preston Street, fifteen feet; thence southerly, parallel to Decker Street, eighty-one feet to Lot No. 19 on the plat referred to in the deed from Josias Pennington, Trustee to William A. Moale, recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore City in Liber TK 342, folio 238; thence westerly, on said lot, and parallel to Preston Street, fifteen feet to the southwest corner of Lot No. 35 on the plat aforesaid; and thence northerly, binding on the westernmost line of Lot No. 35 on the plat aforesaid eighty-one feet to the place of beginning.

type these as footnotes

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- id these as footnote*
- 1/ Baltimore City Directory, 1897 and 1924.
 - 2/ Baltimore City Land Records, Libre RO 1628, folio 500.
 - 3/ The Sun, Jan. 23, 1949, Baltimore, Md.
 - 4/ The Cyclopedia of Fraternities, Albert C. Stevens, E.B. Treat & Co., N.Y., 1907.

- See footnotes to the significance statement
B-3597 B-1508

(continued on separate sheet)
CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.100 acres

See attached plat map.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning for the first thereof on the southeast corner or intersection of Cathedral and Preston Streets; and running thence southerly, binding on the east side of Cathedral Street, forty-one feet four inches; thence easterly, parallel to Preston Street, seventy-three feet eight inches; thence northerly, parallel to Decker Street, forty-one feet to Preston Street; and thence

(continued on separate sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Megan Shook, research assistant

ORGANIZATION

Twin Oaks Associates

DATE

July 1979

STREET & NUMBER

521-523 St. Paul Place

TELEPHONE

(301) 685-4020

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



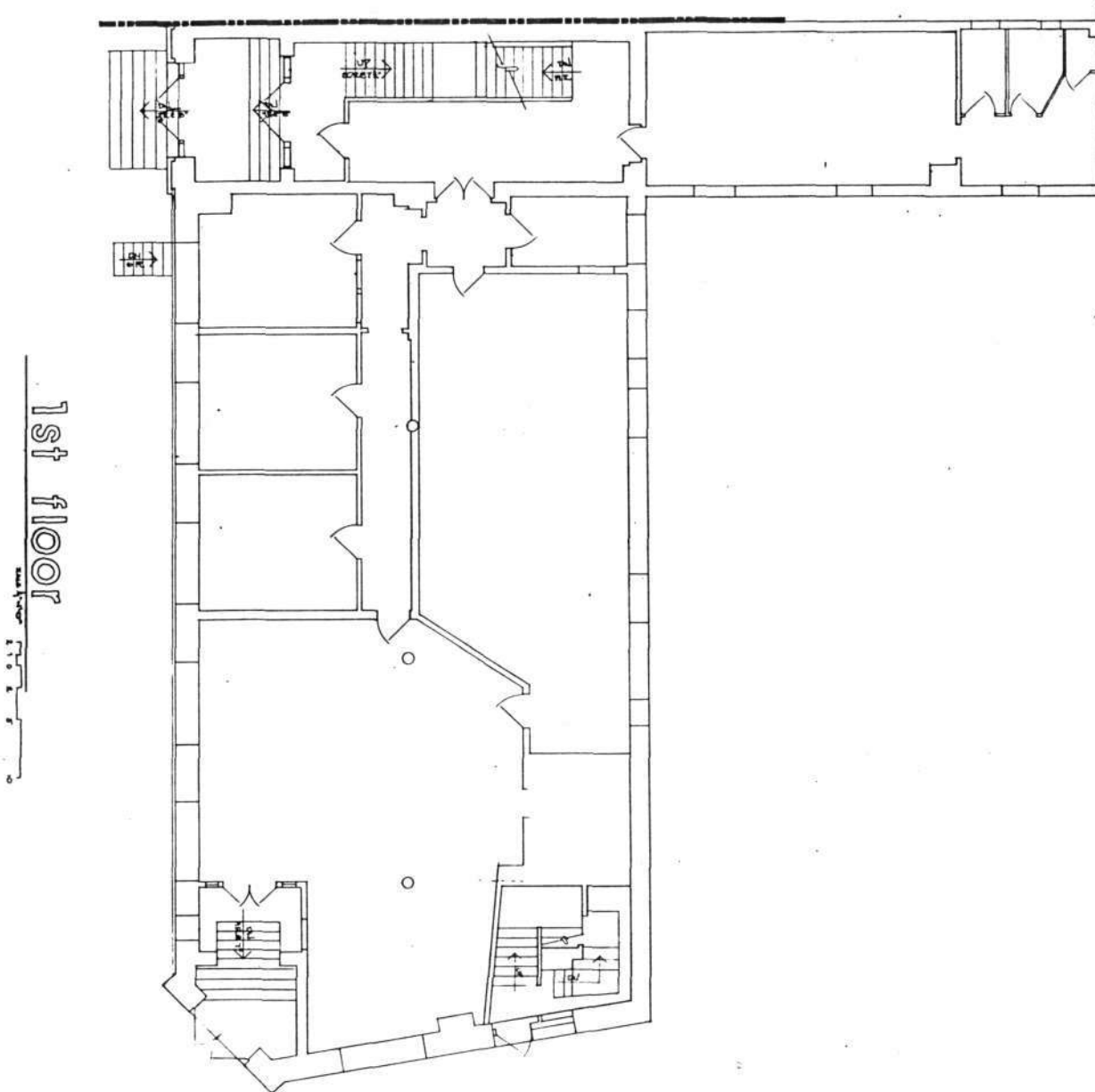
HETASOPH HALL [THEATRE PROJECT]

UTM REFERENCE: B-1508
18. 360460. 4351580

BALTIMORE EAST QUADRANGLE

B-1508

~~B-3597~~



ab
7 as built
plans

45 w preston st
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

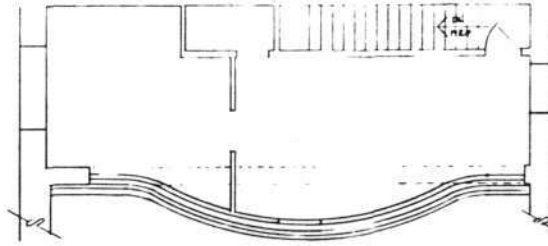
lapicid/smith associates



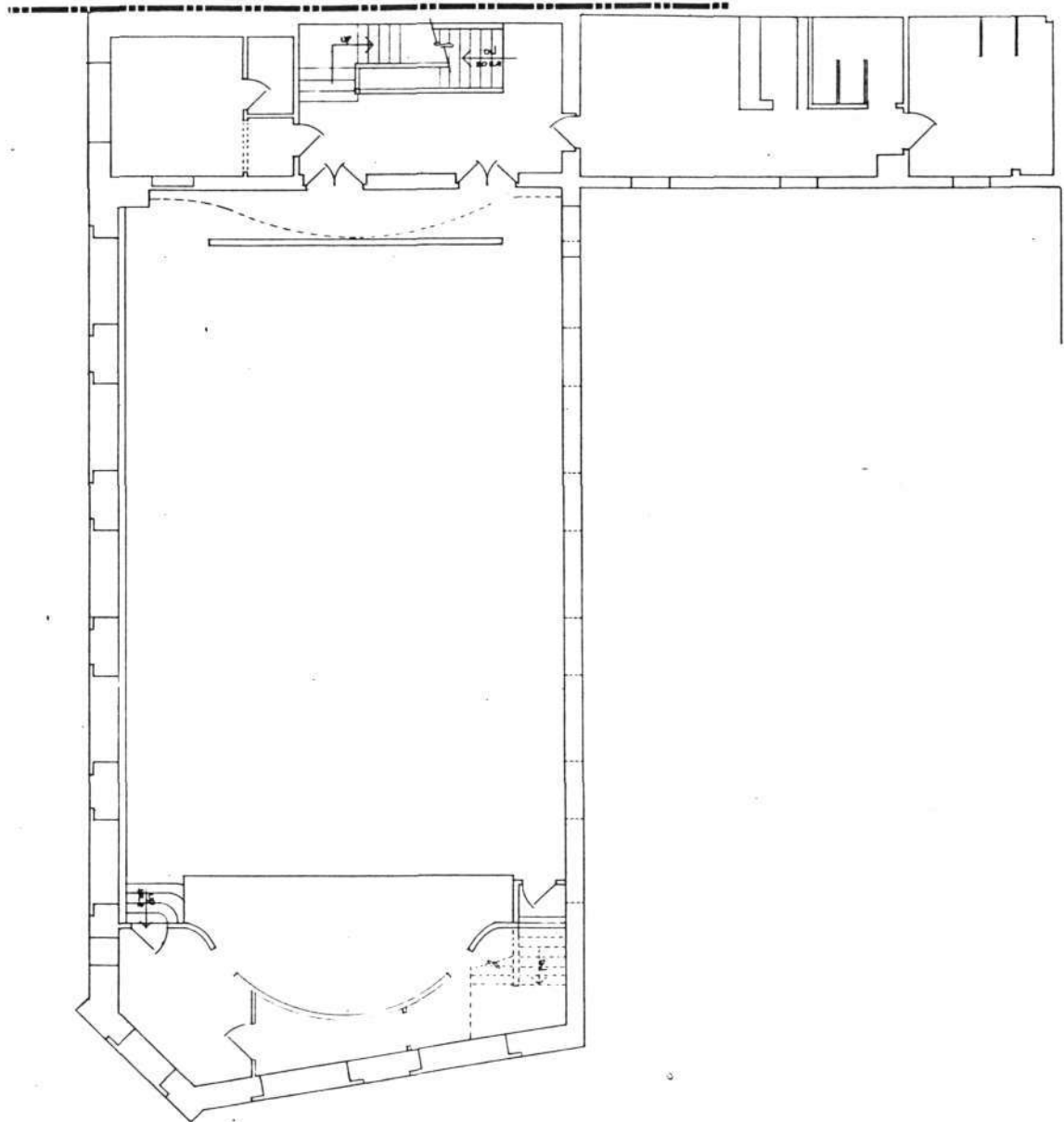
renovations for
THE THEATRE PROJECT
37 W 45 WEST PRESTON STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

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balcony

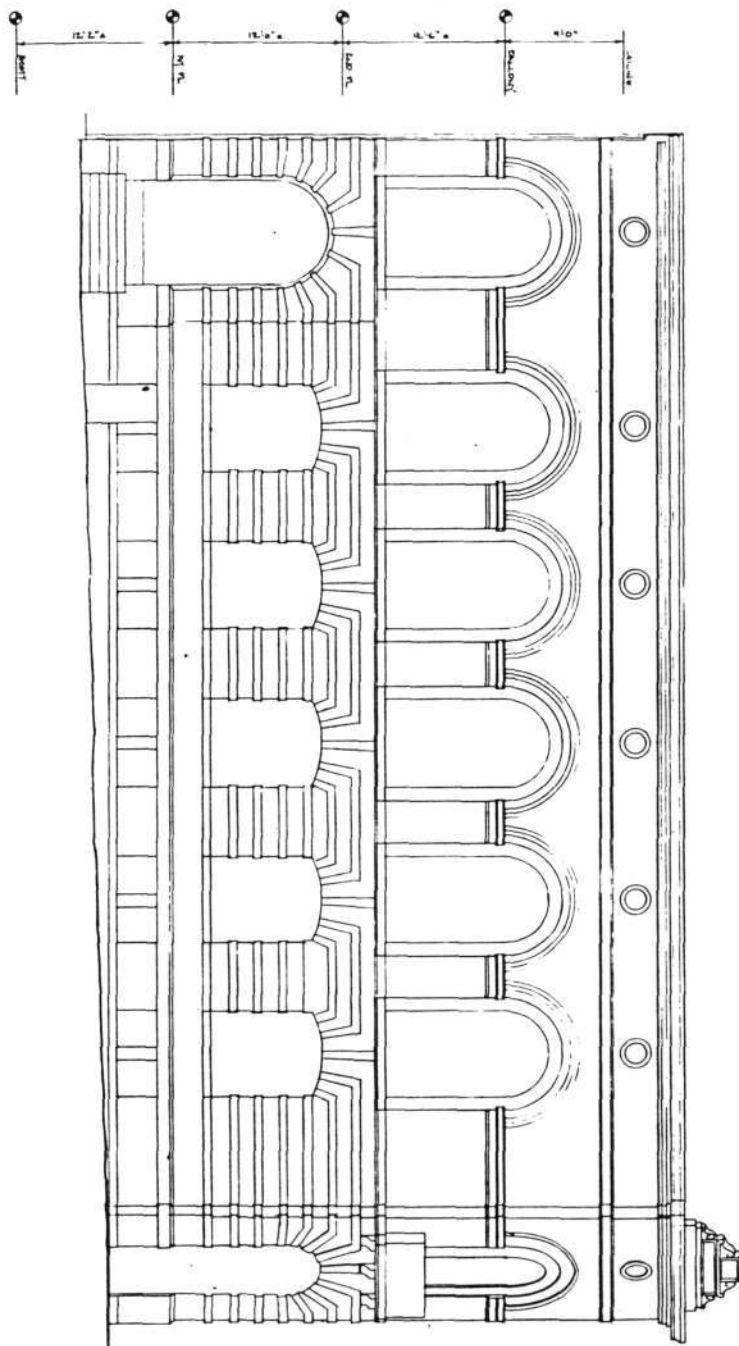


2nd floor



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45 w preston street



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LETTERS

37 INDUAS WEST BOSTON STREET

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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#8 - View of 1/2 of 45 W. Preston St.
Heptasoph Hall plus adjoining buildings
at 37-43 W. Preston, camera pntng SSE

BY: KEVIN SPEEDE ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT: LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD. 21201

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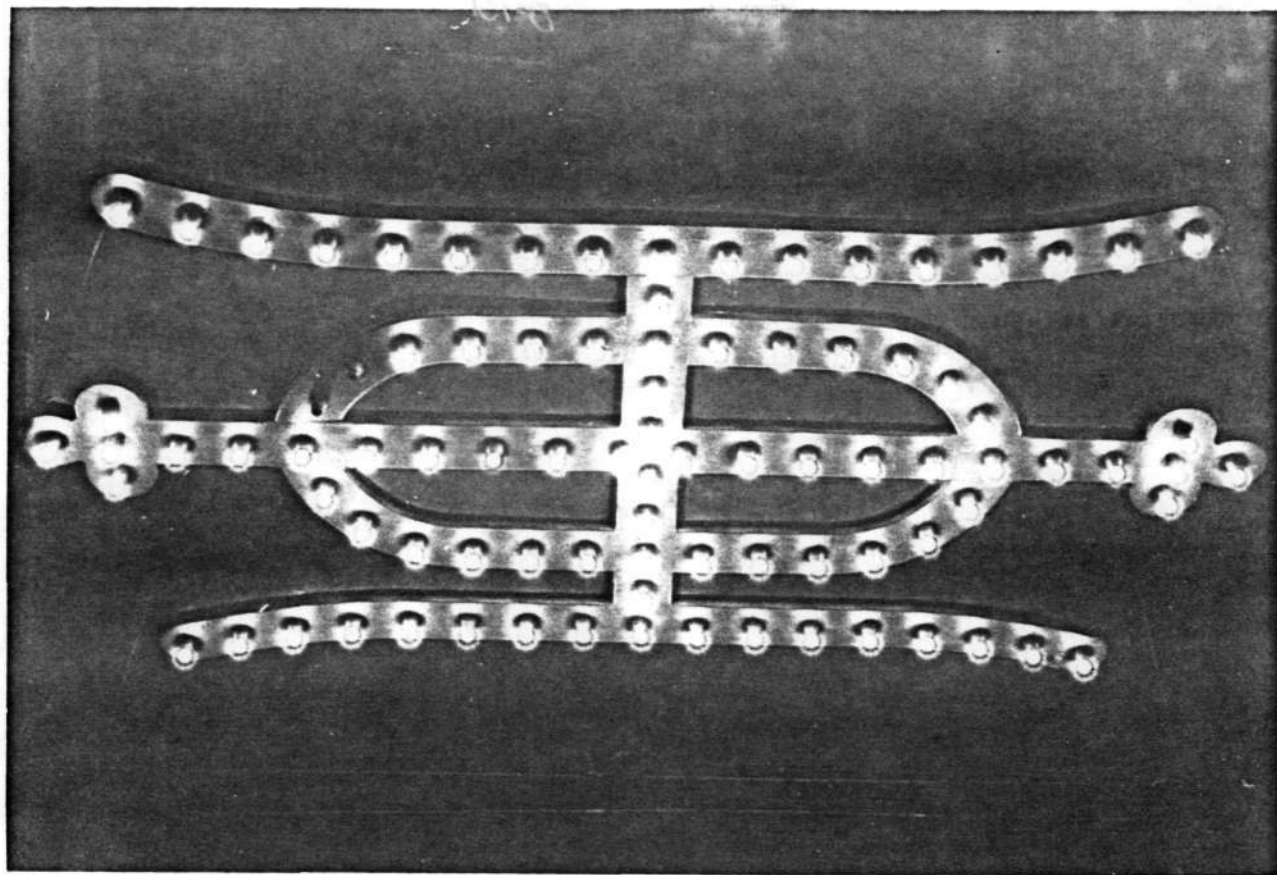
Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto, Md. 21201

#7 - View of N facade of Heptasoph
Hall, camera pointing S

BY: KEVIN SPEEDE ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT: LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD. 21201

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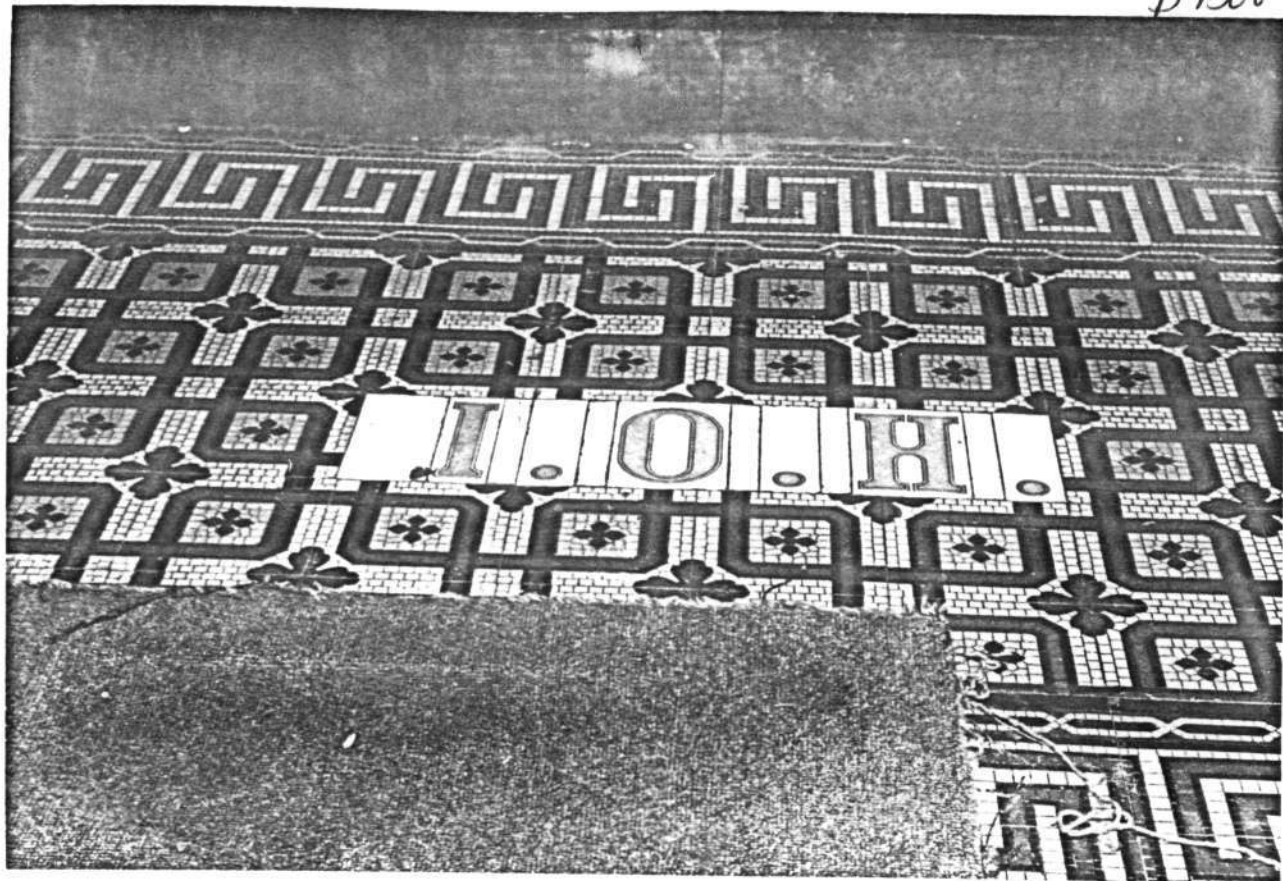
Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Baltimore, Md. 21201

#17 - Logo in ceiling of main
hall on second floor of Heptasoph
Hall

By: Megan Shook, 7/12/79

Negative at: Twin Oak Assoc.
521 St. Paul Pl.
Baltimore, Md. 21202

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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#15 - Mosaic floor of entryway of
door in north facade of Heptasoph
Hall

By : Megan Shook, 7/12/79

Negative at: Twin Oak Assoc.
521 St. Paul Pl.
Baltimore, Md. 21202

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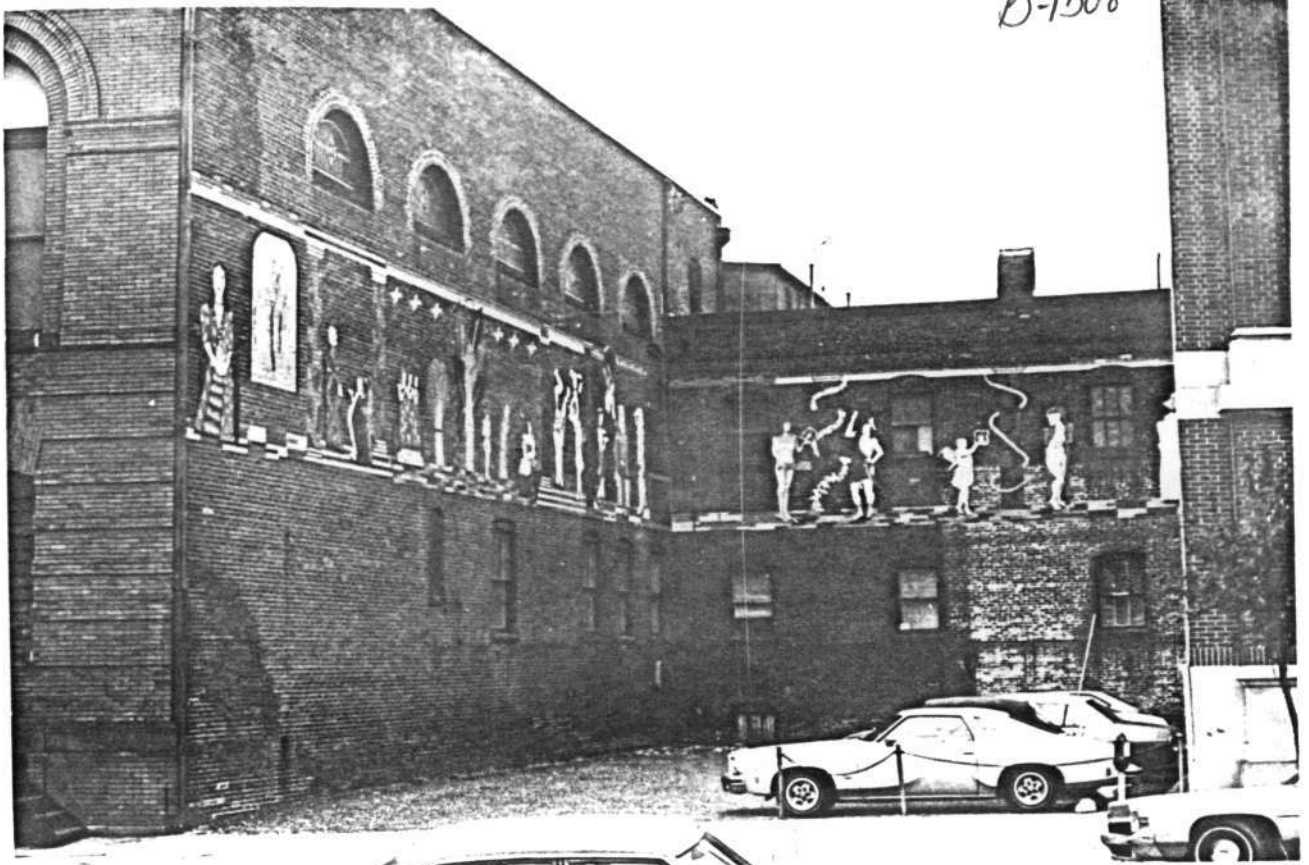
Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#3 - View of west facade of Heptasoph
Hall, including dependency on Med Chi's
Bldg 1211 Cathedral St, camera pntng E

BY: KEVIN SPEICE ; 11.21.79

NEGATIVE AT: LAFORTE/SMITH ASSOC.
217 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD., 21201

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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

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#4 - View of south side and rear portion
of Heptasoph Hall, 45 W. Preston,
camera pointing NE

BY: KEVIN SPEER ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT: LAPECKI/KNITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE MD., 21201

Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

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#1 - View of Heptasoph Hall and adjoining
buildings, camera pointing SE

BY: KEVIN SPEER ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT: LAPECKI/KNITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE MD., 21201



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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#5 - View of west facade of Heptasoph
Hall, camera pointing E

BY: KEVIN SPEECE ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD., 21201

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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#6 -View of west wall bay nearest NW
corner of Heptasoph Hall, camera
pointing E

BY: KEVIN SPEECE ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD., 21201



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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#9 - View of entrance on northside of
Heptasoph Hall, including dependency
on 43 W Preston, camera pointing S

BY KEVIN SPEECE ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
317 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD. 21201

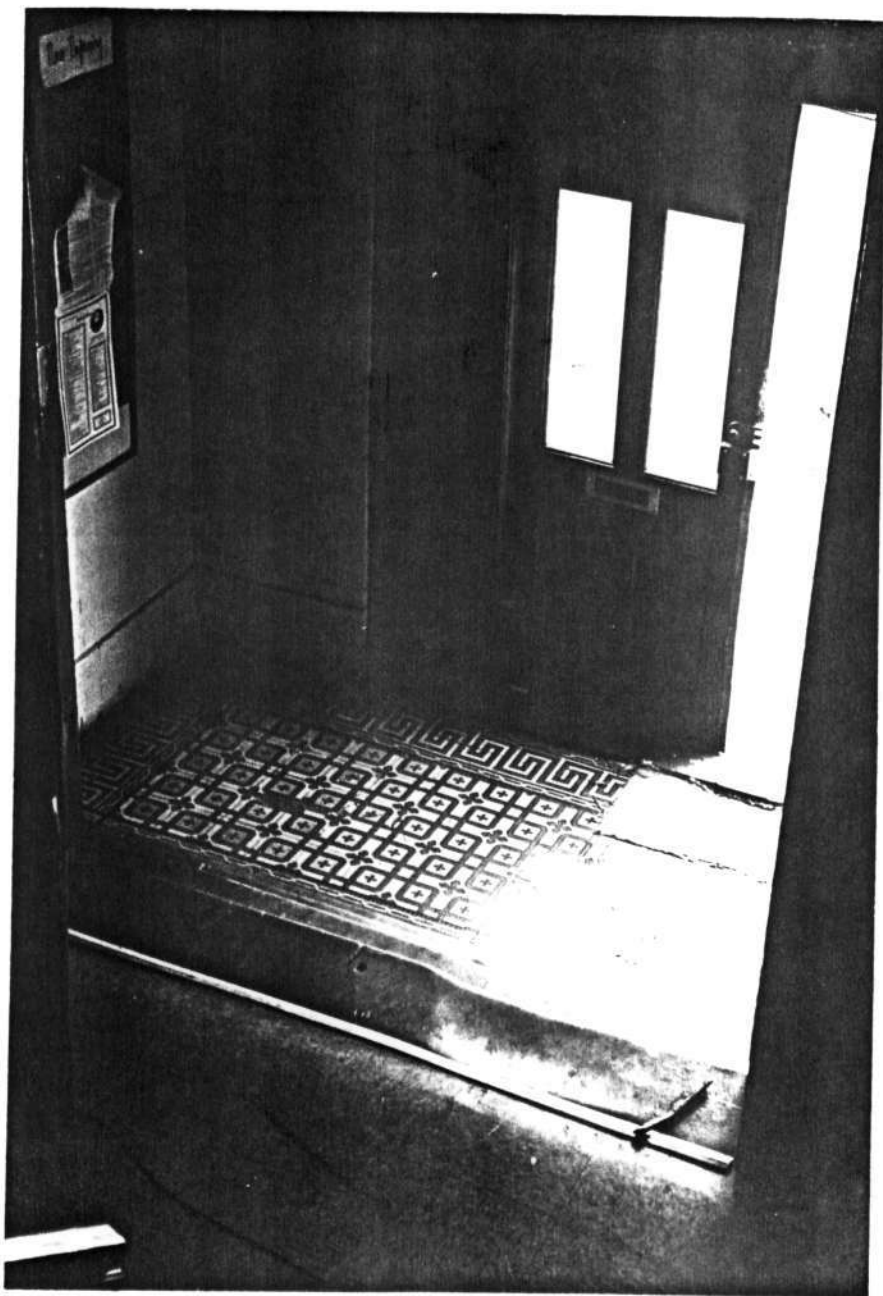
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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#2 - View of NW corner of Heptasoph
Hall, camera pointing SE

BY KEVIN SPEECE ; 11/21/78

NEGATIVE AT LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
317 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD. 21201



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Theatre Project 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#11 - View of one of the 6 bays on
north facade of Heptasoph Hall
camera pointing S

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NEGATIVE AT: LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD. 21201

11/21/78

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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#16 - Entryway of door in north
facade of Heptasoph Hall

By Megan Shcok, 7/12/79

Negative at: Twin Oak Assoc.
521 St. Paul Pl.
Baltimore, Md. 21202



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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#14 - Safe on first floor of
Heptasoph Hall

By: Megan Shook, 7/12/79

Negative at: Twin Oaks Assoc.
521 St. Paul Pl.
Baltimore, Md. 21202

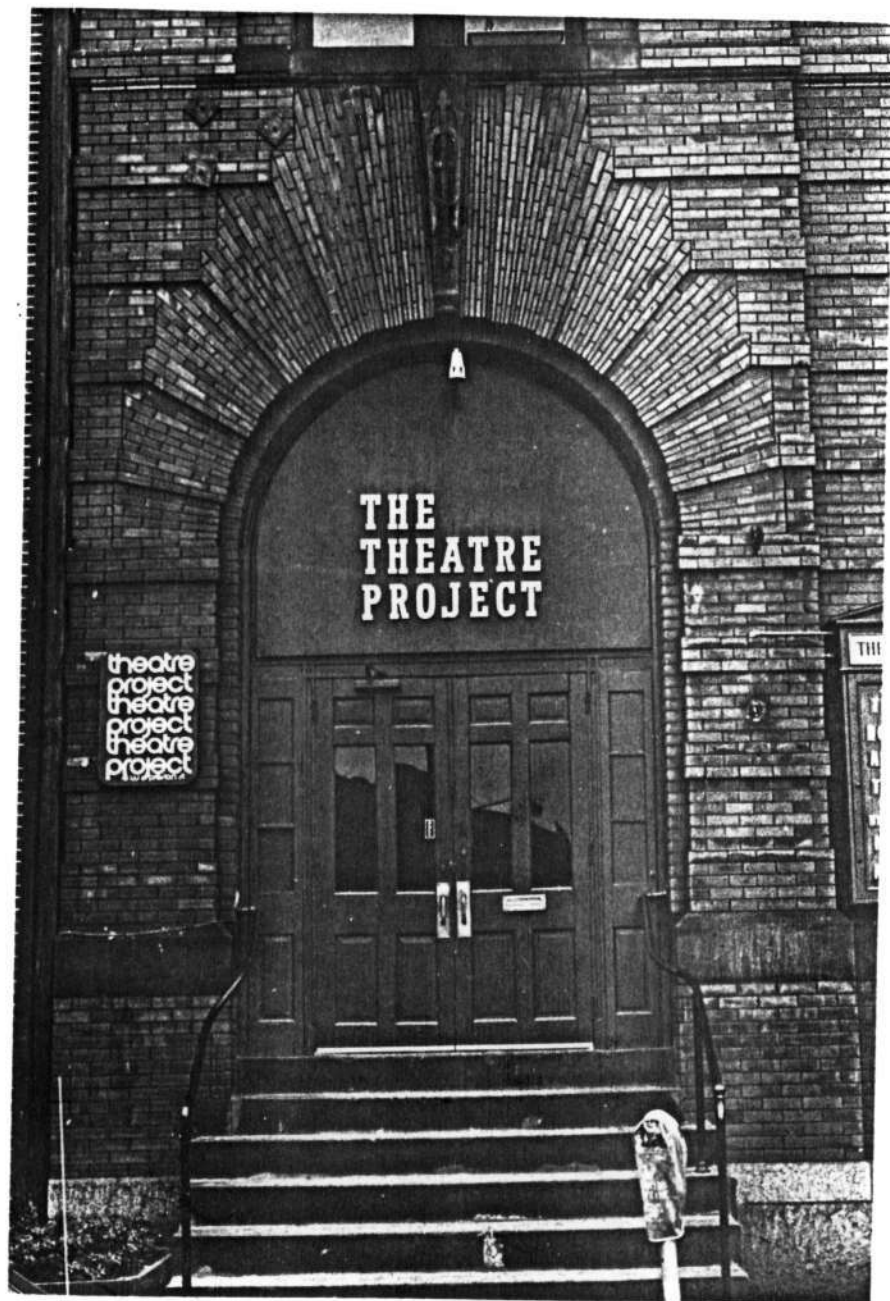
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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., MD. 21201

#13 - Alteration fire escape, west
facade of Heptasoph Hall, camera
pointing NNE

By: Megan Shook, 7/12/79

Negative at: Twin Oaks Assoc.
521 St. Paul Pl.
Baltimore, Md. 21202



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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#12 - Balcony on the second story
NW corner of Heptasoph Hall
camera pointing up and SE

By: Megan Shook, 7/12/79
Negative at: Twin Oaks Assoc.
521 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, Md. 21202

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Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston St.
Balto., Md. 21201

#10 - View of entrance on north side
of Heptasoph Hall, camera pointing S

BY: KEVIN SPEEDE ; 11/21/78

ALTERNATE AT: LAPICKI/SMITH ASSOC.
617 PARK AVE
BALTIMORE, MD. 21201

MAGI# 0438952624

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Washington D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION
APPLICATION--PART 1

Instructions: Applicant should read the instructions carefully before completing application. No certification may be made unless a completed application form has been received. Use typewriter or print clearly in dark ink to complete the application form. If additional space is needed to complete Part 1, use the reverse side or a separate plain sheet of paper clearly indicating the owner's name and mailing address. Part 1 of this application may be completed and sent to the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer at anytime during the year.

PART 1 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. Name of property: Heptasoph Hall
 Address of property: 45 West Preston Street
 City Baltimore County _____ State Md. Zip Code 21201
 Name of historic district in which property is located: Mt. Vernon

Check here if request is for:

- ☒ certification (structure contributes to significance of the district)
☐ decertification (structure does not contribute to significance of the district)
☐ easement qualification (for donation of easement on structure or land for conservation purposes).

2. Description of Physical Appearance:
 (see instructions for map and photograph requirements-use reverse side if necessary)

This building is a two-story structure laid in common bond, six bays wide on its north facade, one bay wide on its chambered corner entrance, and two bays wide on its west

3. Statement of Significance: Heptasoph Hall was built as the headquarters and meeting place for
 (use reverse side if necessary) the Improved Order of Heptasophs, a fraternal and beneficial
organization which flourished in late Nineteenth Century Baltimore and other cities.
The building illustrates rare, well preserved examples of finely crafted, decorative
brickwork. In this century, it has also served as a significant center for theatrical
and other artistic efforts in the city. (over)
 Date of construction (if known): 1916-97 ☒ Original site ☐ Moved ☐ Date of alterations (if known): _____

4. Name and Mailing Address of Owner:

Name Heptasoph Limited Partnership (Peter Behringer, general partner)
 Street c/o 518 North Charles Street
 City Baltimore State Md. Zip Code 21201
 Telephone number (during day): Area Code (301) 659-6966, 67, 68

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is to the best of my knowledge, correct, and that I am owner of the property described above.

Signature [Signature] Date 2/27/83

Social Security Number or Taxpayer Identification Number S.S.# 069-36-6647

For office use only

The structure described above is included within the boundaries of a Registered Historic District and ☒ contributes ☐ does not contribute to the character of the district.

The structure ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36CFR 60.6) and ☐ will likely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with the Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60).

Structure is located in a district which ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36CFR 60.6) and ☐ will likely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60). and ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to contribute to the character of said district or ☐ will likely ☐ will not be recommended for certification as substantially meeting National Register criteria.

Signature [Signature] Date 4-13-83

State Historic Preservation Officer

Description of Physical Appearance (Cont'd):

facade. (Photo # 1).

On the extreme left of the north facade are seven steps which lead to double wooden doors, framed by wood. A round-arched transom, now covered by wood, is overhead, set in a round arch emphasized by splayed brickwork of headers interspersed between brick jointing. (Photo # 2).

To the west of this entrance, which faces Preston Street, is a stone water table above which hang single, one-light basement windows in pairs, some of which are boarded or graded. All the windows have flat-arched stone lintels which are part of a stone belt course. (Photo # 3).

Above the basement windows are pairs of double-hung, one-over-one windows with one-piece, segmentally-arched transoms set within segmentally-arched niches. (Photo # 4).

The windows on the second story of the north facade are paired, double-hung, one-over-one with stained glass, round-arched transoms. They are set in compound stilted round arches. The voussoirs consist of straight bond headers with two string courses above. One rondelle is above in each bay. A dentiled, moulded roof cornice tops the facade. Fenestration and decoration of the west facade follows the plan of the north facade. The south facade, which faces a parking lot, is basically a less elaborate brick wall with a few windows. (Photos # 4, 5).

The chambered corner entrance at Preston and Cathedral Streets contains glass double doors surmounted by a round-arched transom of four lights of sheet glass. Decoration of the arch follows the pattern of the north facade except for the addition of a large bracket for a keystone at the crown of the arch. (Photo # 6).

A bracketed stone balcony is located above the corner doorway. A pair of French windows with two lights each sits behind it. Above the windows is a round-arched, stained glass transom set within a stilted round arch similar to those of the second story of the north facade. A pediment, consisting of truncated frieze flanked by scrolls, is above the rondelle and roof cornice. (Photos # 7, 8).

A first floor window in the west wall was converted to an emergency exit door with a small iron staircase to the pavement sometime after 1949. (Photo # 9). Most of the interior spaces have been altered and substantially modified by the building's various owners and occupants. The basement level now contains a large dance studio, scene shop, boiler room, locker rooms and the lower section of a two-story walk-in safe. (Photos # 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15).

The entrance on West Preston Street has a ceramic tile mosaic set in the floor with the logo of the Improved Order of Heptasophs set in the center. The vestibule doors are original and made of paneled oak. (Photos # 16, 17).

The main stair to the second floor assembly space is intact with treads, handrail and wood details, although in disrepair. (Photo # 18).

The balcony on the second floor arcs out from the east wall of the building. Its balustrade, moldings and underside of its floor are original woodwork. (Photo # 19).

The main hall on the second floor below the balcony level has been least altered from its original state. A ceiling mounted version of the IOH logo, inset with small lights, has been restored. The original floor was covered by a new wood floor in 1977. (Photos # 20, 21).

The original stage in the second floor hall is intact, although it has been shortened. It is set three feet above the floor and has a curved plaster proscenium with a storage room behind it. (Photos # 22, 23).

The ground level of the building, which sits between the basement and the second floor hall, has been divided into office cubicles by temporary wallboards. The only original feature is the second story of the walk-in safe. (Photos # 24, 25).

Statement of Significance (Cont'd):

The IOH was chartered in Maryland in 1878. The Zeta Club Conclave No. 6 bought the land for their new headquarters in May 1896 from Corilla P. King, widow of the owner of the W.H. King and Co. Lumber and Mill Work, which had occupied the site until destroyed by fire about 1887. (Continued on another sheet)

Statement of Significance (Cont'd):

The Improved Order of Heptasophs was a secret society. The members were business men who joined together for mutual benefit in much the same manner as masonic and other orders. The name "Heptasoph" is derived from the ancient Greek and connotes "seven wise men."

The Zeta Club, the Baltimore chapter, also sponsored an insurance program for its members as well as a savings and loan association, the Heptasoph Savings and Loan and Building Association. Their insurance program, similar to those of many other fraternal orders, helped lay a foundation for the development of today's large, national insurance companies. The Heptasoph program, for example, became insolvent in 1917 and merged with the Fraternal Aid Union of Lawrence, Kansas, which later became the Standard Mutual Insurance Company.

They built the present building during 1896-1897 at a cost of \$40,000. Since no information can be found about the designer or builders, we presume that the architectural records in city archives were destroyed during Baltimore's Great Fire of 1904.

But it is obvious that the builders, particularly the bricklayers, were unusually fine craftsmen. The style and quantity of the decorative brickwork is rare in Baltimore today. The Preston and Cathedral Street corner conforms to the angle of this intersection, and the entire structure bespeaks the care and skill of solid workers who knew and cared about their crafts.

Several interior logos still exist to evoke the memory of this secret society about which little else is known. A two-story safe constructed as part of the building illustrates the zeal with which they guarded their records and assets. In 1907 there were about 12,000 members in Maryland, and this building must have been the scene of many discussions, meetings and debates involving an unknown mixture of tradesmen, craftsmen and businessmen, some of whom may have played important community roles.

In 1924, however, the Heptasophs abandoned their hall and moved to their savings and loan building at 1106 East Monument Street in Baltimore. They rented part of the hall to Farson's Dance Academy, thus beginning a 60-year period of use for performing artists. Mr. Farson's marching and dance bands entertained the public here, and it was a favorite place during the 1920's for Saturday night dances.

The Zeta Club finally went into receivership in 1942, and the Orthodox Greek Church Evangelism, Inc. bought Heptasoph Hall to serve as a community recreation center and school for the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, located across the street on Preston.

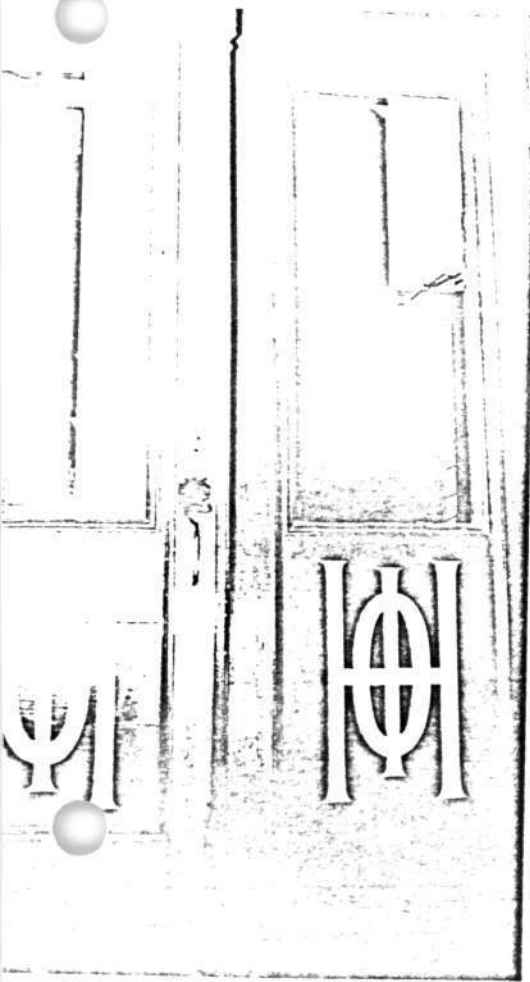
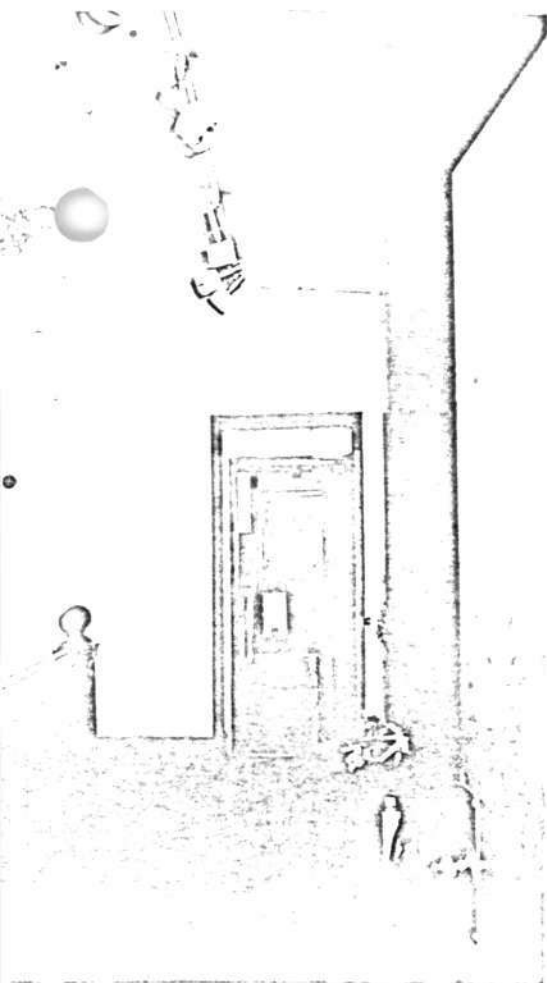
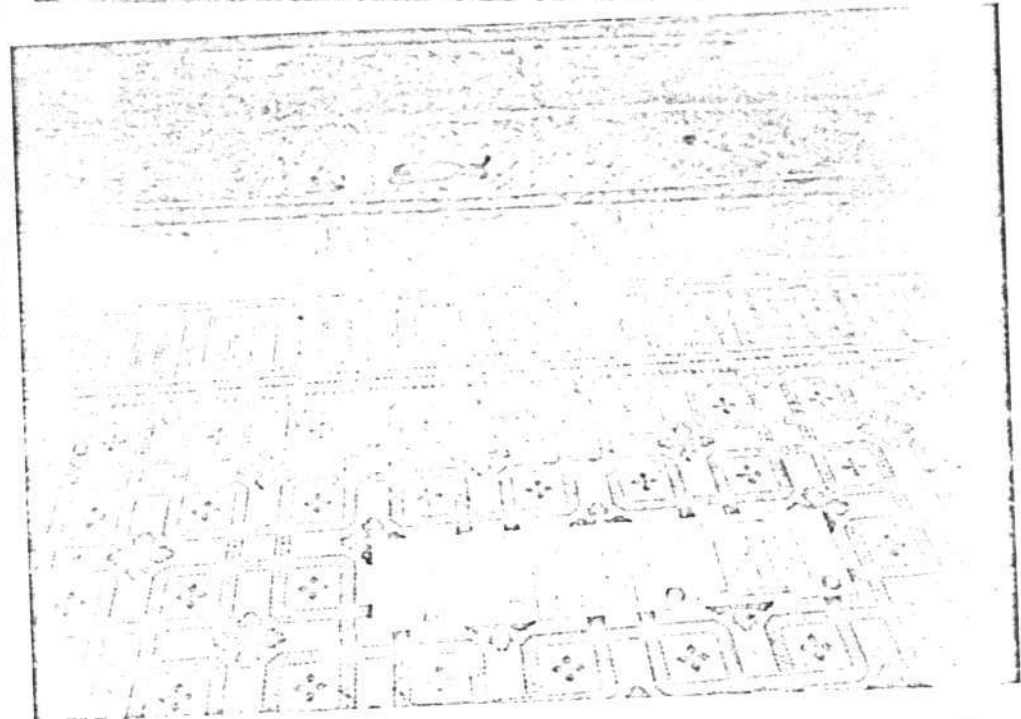
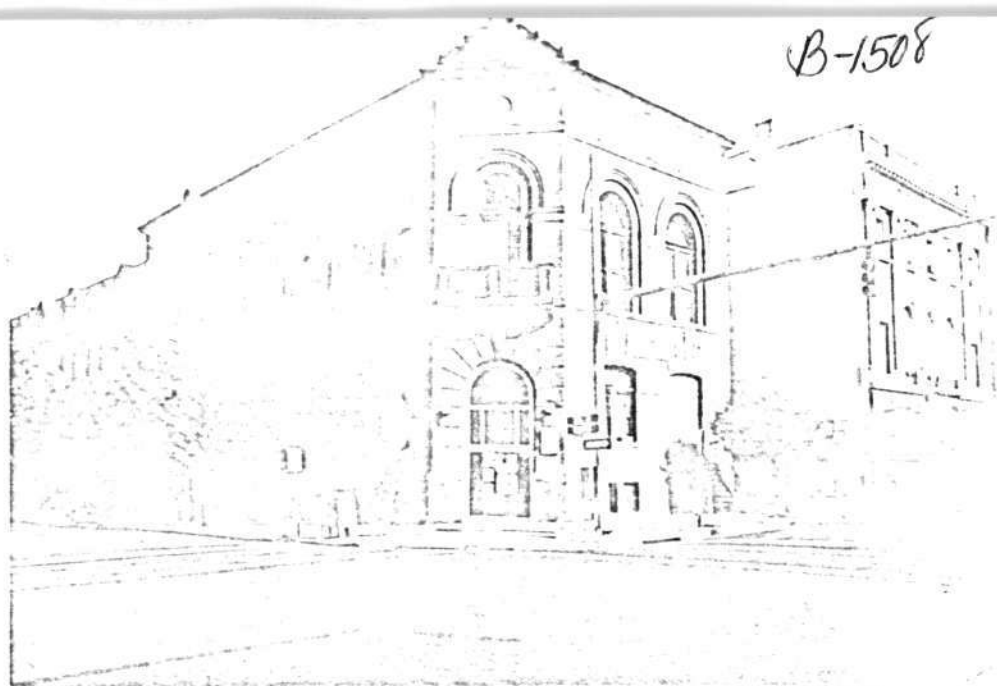
Center Stage, Baltimore's nationally known regional theater, began its existence in the Heptasoph Hall. The theater opened for business there on January 13, 1963, with a two-week run of Arthur Schnitzler's play "La Ronde."

The Theatre Project, an experimental theater group, rented the second floor hall and the basement in 1971 and gradually grew into the rest of the building as it expanded with free performances by dance and theater groups from throughout the United States and Europe.

Baltimore City bought the property in 1977 and gave it to the Theatre Project at nominal cost with the proviso that the city would have to approve any subsequent sale.

When the city approved such a sale to the present owners in order to renovate the Theatre Project space and construct a new restaurant/cabaret, one more imaginative piece was added to its long history of use as community meeting place, performing arts center and stimulus for American ingenuity and craftsmanship.

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